

Agriculture

STATUS OF WORK UNDER NASA TRANSFER OF FUNDS TO THE ECONOMIC RESEARCH SERVICE, USDA R-09-038-001

September 1, 1964 -- February 28, 1965

In the early part of this period, activities of personnel of the Resource Development Economics Division, Economic Research Service, USDA, were limited to conferences and consultation on the proposed research and outlining possible approaches on procedures. Three researchers attended the Remote Sensing Symposium at Ann Arbor, Michigan, October 12-16, and the meeting of the NASA Geoscience Test Site Selection Committee. ERS took the lead in coordinating and consulting work in connection with the establishment of a technical applications center for agricultural uses of remote sensing from space.

Since December 28, 1964, when we were notified of approval of the funding, research has been directed primarily towards the identification of potential agricultural applications of remote sensing from space platforms through a review of literature and of research in progress. A list of potential applications has been compiled, which includes most agricultural applications of low-altitude remote sensing that have been made and those emerging applications which appear to have strong likelihood of success in the near future. In this review of literature, particular attention has been to the scope of each application, its frequency, the characteristics of imagery used, and detail interpreted. Consequently, a notion of minimum imagery requirements for each potential application has been acquired.

Professional personnel working on this study have, of course, found it necessary to review literature reporting on observations of the earth's surface from satellite altitudes, and attend meetings and symposia on remote sensing as a means of developing a familiarity with the state of the arts in high-altitude sensing, keeping abreast of technical research in progress, and learning about closely allied research in potential application areas other than agriculture. For these purposes, one or more professional personnel have attended meetings of the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Remote Sensing in Agriculture and a Conference on the Utilization of Satellites for Geographic Research.

During this reporting period, much time was spent by professional personnel in developing a broad working agreement between the USDA and

NASA for remote sensing research, including the establishment of a Technical Applications Center at Purdue University. These activities have included consulting with IBM Corporation, which is under contract with NASA, coordinating research proposals and working arrangements among the various agencies of USDA and other institutions, and negotiating the working agreement with NASA, as well as actual preparation of much of the documentation necessary for such a working agreement. Other related activities include consulting services to the Institute of Science and Technology, University of Michigan, in the preparation of its preliminary report regarding benefits of agricultural applications of remote sensing from space platforms.

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